

WORKS

REPENTANCE FROM DEAD WORKS

When dealing with the issue of repentance from dead works, it is necessary to point out that while Scripture condemns dead works, it does so in order to highlight the truth we are to embrace.

Dead works can never produce justification, righteousness, sanctification or transfiguration. Full salvation is secured for us by the Work of Christ, not by any human Work or merit.

WORKS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The New Testament calls us to repent from dead works. This grievous sin assumes that God's full salvation can be earned or purchased by the works of men. The authors of the New Testament are clear regarding the inability of the human race to produce anything worthy. The Scriptures portray the condition of race by proclaiming the following:

- There is none righteous
- None understands God
- None seeks God
- All have gone out of the way
- All have become unprofitable
- None does good
- Our throat is an open sepulchre
- Our tongue uses deceit
- Our lips have the poison of asps
- Our mouth is full of cursing
- Our feet are swift to shed blood
- Destruction and misery are in our ways
- We have not known the way of peace
- There is no fear of God before our eyes

- We are all guilty before God
- We have all come short of the glory of God.

The New Testament declares that due to our human nature (described above), we are able to produce any work that is worthy of God's gift of salvation. Is it any wonder that the prophets state that, on a good day, our best works are but menstrual rags. The writers of the New Testament consider the idea of paying for God's salvation as an absurd idea. We are not saying that human beings are incapable of doing good things. We are saying that we can never stand before God and pay for the gift he is offering the human race. Jesus has paid that price. As we read through the pages of Scripture, we are able to see that historically, the work of our hands have produced:

- Evil works
- Works of the flesh
- Unfruitful works of darkness
- Unprofitable works
- We have built with wood, hay or stubble.

Prior to repentance, we are called evil workers and children of disobedience. We were capable of producing only dead works in regard to salvation. Our works were inspired by the spirit of this age and brought men into bondage. A bad tree cannot produce good fruit unless its branches have been grafted to God's vine.

After repentance, however, we are said to be capable of producing good works. After accepting that Jesus has paid for our salvation, we can then produce works that bring glory to God. The process is simple. Upon hearing, receiving, and practicing God's Word, it works effectually in us. The Word of God infuses a new nature into us and opens the way for Father, Son and Holy Spirit to indwell us. We are then challenged to build with gold, silver and precious stones. The works we produce are tested with fire and rewarded accordingly.

WHAT ARE DEAD WORKS?

The writers of the New Testament warn us concerning dead works. Dead works compete with the work of Christ as a means to acquiring full salvation?

The New Testament provides a list of dead works:

- Circumcision
- The deeds of the law
- Observation of Days

- Observation of Months
- Observation of Times
- Observation of Years
- Ceremonial laws related to meat
- Ceremonial laws related to drink
- Ceremonial laws related to holydays
- Ceremonial laws related to new moons
- Ceremonial laws related to sabbath day.
- Voluntary humility
- Worshipping of angels
- Abstinence of certain practices: touch not, taste not, handle not
- Blood of bulls and goats
- Relationship to Abraham
- Membership in the Jewish race
- Membership in the Jewish religion
- Offerings according to the Law of Moses

Note that most of the practices are religious in nature. Most of them are not evil in and of themselves. They become evil when we think that the practice is sufficient to earn us salvation. (Right standing with God, Justification, sanctification and transfiguration) These works are too weak to produce justification, righteousness or sanctification. We are called to repent or change our mind about thinking that any human-work can ever buy God's wonderful gift of salvation. The religious Jews of the New Testament declared that except a man be circumcised or practice the Mosaic law he could not be saved. This dispute was settled by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem. The leadership of the church announced that any insistence on practicing any item on the list provided above was constituted as tempting God and putting a yoke upon the neck of the disciples. Paul declared that those who teach a work-based salvation bring a curse upon themselves and will be judged because of their perverted message. If we cannot do anything to secure the salvation God offers, then what must we do to be saved. The writers of Scripture unanimously declare, "The just shall live by faith." I would ask, faith in what? We have embrace, believe and have faith in what Jesus has done in order to secure God's gift of salvation for us.

THE FINISHED WORK OF CHRIST AND REPENTANCE

The writer to the Hebrews states that Jesus offered one sacrifice for ever and then sat down on the right hand of God. Our full salvation comes to us by his grace, not human effort. The purpose of God stands, not of works, but of him that calls us. Paul informs us that it is not of him that wills, but of God who shows mercy. God is the one who gives repentance to the acknowledging of the truth. God made a new covenant and Jesus was its messenger. The covenant put the laws of God into our heart and mind and we have been sprinkled from an evil conscience. Jesus took away man's religion and established new covenant.

Salvation: Justification

We have been justified (declared innocent) freely by his grace. Justification comes to us through the redemption that is in Jesus. We have come to him with the empty hand of faith. Prior to repentance, we were guilty before God because of our law-breaking. We had brought upon us the curse of the law because of our failure. We were awaiting punishment and an eternal death sentence was hanging over us. We had no representation before the court of heaven until Jesus stepped up. He intervened on our behalf. He paid our debt. Through his work of death, we were constituted and declared to be innocent. Our law breaking debt was paid in full. Through his work of death, we were freed from punishment and eternal death. We were provided a clean slate through the work of Christ (his burial). Jesus was sent by Father to condemn sin in the flesh. Jesus made remission of sins. Our sins and iniquities he will remember no more.

Our faith focuses on the effectiveness of the work of Christ. It is Jesus who saved us from guilt (through his death). It is Jesus who saved us from our debt of sin (through his burial). It is Jesus who rescued us from punishment and the curse of eternal death.

The writers of the New Testament agree that no justification is possible apart from the work Christ accomplished. The just are to live by faith in what Jesus accomplished through his work (**death and burial**). He secured justification and forgiveness for us.

Now, there is no condemnation (guilt) to those who have come to the knowledge of Christ. There is no fear of eternal death and punishment. Jesus has lifted the curse and has showered us with the blessing of heaven.

Salvation: Righteousness

Our faith in his work (**his human life**) is also counted for righteousness. It is by his perfect life that we have been reconciled to God. It is not enough to have a clean slate (forgiveness of sins). We must now stand in God's presence. This requires a robe of righteousness. The problem is that by nature, we are unrighteous. We were born in sin. The solution is that by nature, Christ is righteous. He was sinless and never broke the law. When we repented, Jesus imputed/transferred his righteousness into our account. Today, we can stand and enjoy the presence of God because we who believe now wear the robe of the righteous Jesus. Jesus has granted us atonement (made us one with God).

The Jews believe that human beings had to earn righteousness by practicing the law. Scripture informs us that all sinned/broke the law and fell short of God's glory. We acquire righteousness by believing in the work of Jesus. What work is this? His work of living a sinless life so he could impute his righteousness to us so we could experience fullness of joy in God's presence.

Jesus, by his righteousness (perfect life), brought the free gift upon all men unto justification of life. His obedience made us righteous. Grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus.

The law of the Jews, on the other hand, was too weak to deliver the necessary righteousness to stand in God's presence. The just shall live by faith in the work of Christ (His sinless life imputes his righteousness to us)

Sanctification

The writer to the Hebrews informs us that we are sanctified by the offering of Jesus once for all. The work of sanctification (holiness, transformed to image of Christ, changed) that God began in us will continue until the day Jesus returns. In reference to sanctification, Paul declares, faithful is He who called you who will also DO IT. The work of Christ through his resurrection has brought to us a new nature. Scripture teaches that if any man be in union with Christ, old things are passed away, behold all things are made new. This is the process of sanctification. As we remain in union with Christ, we are changed from glory to glory. We are conformed to his image and likeness. As we walk in the Spirit, we are transformed into a channel of life and blessing to the world. This process is made possible by the work of Christ (resurrection). After his resurrection, he ascended and was glorified. He was made both Lord and Christ and sent to us the Holy Spirit who is now completing the work transforming us into God's masterpiece. The just shall live by faith in the work of Christ (His resurrection). We have become partaker of His divine nature and are in the process of becoming like him.

Entrance into God's Presence

Jesus has brought to us a better hope. He made things perfect and we can now draw near to God. Jesus is the mediator of a better covenant. He is the high priest of good things to come. By the offering of himself, he perfected for ever those who are sanctified. We can now enter with boldness into God's presence because of his blood. He has provided us with a new and living way to enter God's presence. We can draw near to God with full assurance of faith.

The Problem of Dead Works

The process of salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification and glorification. The writers of the New Testament agreed that salvation was made possible only by the work Christ accomplished in his birth, life, death, burial, resurrection and ascension. The Jews, on the other hand, made the work of Christ of none effect by declaring that salvation is possible only by producing works that were worthy of God. The Jews peddled various methods of acquiring salvation - Law-keeping (Civil, Ceremonial and Moral), circumcision, membership of the Jewish race, and membership of the Jewish religion.

Scripture teaches that it is only the finished work of Christ that is sufficient to secure full salvation. The just shall live faith is what Jesus has secured. The author of the letter to the Hebrews admonishes us to repent from the idea human, work-based dead works can secure salvation. It is an insult to heaven and will bring a curse upon those who refuse to abandon this mindset.

Love is the fulfilling of the law.

Work with your hands

The **work of God** - destroy not with meat

Our works will be made manifest in the last day.

Our works will be tried with fire.

Works that survive the fire will be rewarded.

If **man's works** are burned, they will suffer loss, but will be saved by fire.

Abound in the **work of the Lord**

Our work is not in vain.

Workers together with God.

Abound to every good work

We will be rewarded according to our works.

Prove your own work.

God works all things after the counsel of his own will.

God's mighty power is working in us.

Salvation is not of works.

God's Work: We are God's masterpiece.

We are created in Christ unto **good works**.

God has ordained good works that we should walk in them.

God's effectual working of power makes us ministers.

His power works in us.

He is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think.

We are to do the work of ministry

Work: We are to edify the body of Christ

We are to edify the body according to the effectual working of God

Work with your hands.

God began a work in us.

God will perform his work in us until the day of Jesus.

We are to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling.

God works in us to will his good pleasure.

God works in us to do of his good pleasure.

The **work of Christ**

His working will change our vile body

His working will fashion our body into his glorious body.

Be fruitful in every good work

Good work: Increase in the knowledge of God

Wicked works make us enemies in our mind

Strive according to his working

His power works in me mightily.

Do **works of faith**

Esteem laborers very highly for their work's sake

God will fulfill all the good pleasure of his goodness and work of faith with power.

God will establish us in every good word and work

Work to eat.

Work, don't be a busybody.

Work with quietness.

Produce good works

Good work: seeking the office of a bishop

Widows produce good works: bring up children, lodge strangers, wash feet, relieve afflicted

Manifest your good works

Be rich in good works - willing to communicate

Good works: Be a vessel of honor

Good works: be sanctified

Good works: Be meet for the master's use unto every good work

Good works: Be thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Men who do evil will be rewarded according to their works.

Lord delivers me from every evil work

Do not deny God with your works - abominable, disobedience, reprobate unto every good work.

Good works: Show yourself a pattern of good works - in doctrine

He gave himself for us ... that we should be zealous of good works.

Be ready to every good work.

Be careful to maintain good works.

Learn to maintain good works for necessary uses.

God's work was finished from the foundation of the world.

TRUTH ABOUT REPENTANCE IN NEW TESTAMENT

The law is too weak to deliver righteousness.

Jesus was sent by Father to condemn sin in the flesh.

Purpose of God stand, not of works, but of him that calls.

It is up to God who show mercy.

God hardens who He wills.

Dead works cannot produce righteousness.

If dead works could produce righteousness, your faith would be void and the promises of God would be of no effect.

Justification is not by the works of the law.

Justification is by the faith of Jesus.

Those who believe in Jesus are justified.

Those who trust dead works are hindered and are disobeying the truth.

Real circumcision refers to those who worship God in spirit and rejoice in Jesus.

Doctrine of Christ (Foundational Truth) - Repentance from dead works

We are to bring forth fruit worthy of repentance

Faith establishes the law.

Faith does not make the law void.

Apostles opposed those who lived contrary to the truth.

Apostles did not give place to those who opposed the truth.

Apostles opposed those who mislead others regarding the truth.

The law came 430 years after the promise.

The law cannot disannul the promise of God.

Avoid foolish questions, genealogies, contentions, and strivings about the law. They are unprofitable.

Receive the word, be baptized and be added to the church.

Turn from your vanities unto the living God.

Conversion causes great joy.

Lose your life to find it.

We cannot attain righteousness by the law.

Without blood, there is no remission for sins.

Bring forth fruit meet for repentance.

There is joy in heaen over one sinner that repents.

Righteousness is of faith.

God's goodness leads to repentance.

God's forbearance and longsuffering lead to repentance.

God is the justifier of those who believe in Jesus.

Abraham received circumcision as a sign of his faith.

Righteousness is imputed, not earned.

Promises come thorough the righteousness of faith.

The law works wrath.

Justification is of faith.

Justification is by grace.

Abraham's faith was imputed to him for righteousness

Jesus died for the ungodly.

Being sinners, Christ died for us. It was not earned.

Jesus has abounded unto us the grace of God.

Jesus has abounded toward us the gift by grace.

The law magnified the offence of men.

We attain righteousness of faith.

Do not seek righteousness by the works of the law. You will stumble.

Seek righteousness by faith.

Do not establish your own righteousness.

Those who seek to establish their own righteousness are ignorant, and fail to submit to God's righteousness.

Circumcision is nothing.

Keeping the commandments of God is something.

Jesus was made sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

Godly sorrow leads to repentance.

Godly sorrow works repentance to salvation.

Do not fear those who promote a works-based justification.

Those who promote a works-based justification do not walk uprightly or according to the truth of the gospel.

Do not compel others to live like you.

Righteousness does not come by the law.

The Spirit is not received by the works of the law.

The Spirit is received by the hearing of faith.

Sanctification does not come by the works of the law.

Sanctification comes by the hearing of faith.

We do not minister the Spirit by the works of the law.

We minister the Spirit by the hearing of faith.

WE do not work miracles by the works of the law.

We work miracles by the hearing of faith.

The works of the law lead to a curse.

Our inheritance does not come to us by the law.

The law functions as schoolmaster to bring us to Christ.

We are justified by faith.

A works-based religion leads to weak and beggarly elements.

Circumcision profits nothing.

If circumcision brings righteousness, Christ will profit you nothing and you have fallen from grace.

Circumcision avails nothing.

Faith which works by love avails.

A works-based salvation leavens the whole lump.

Real circumcision is putting off the body of the sins by the circumcision of Christ.

The law is for the lawless, disobedient, ungodly and sinners.

Grace is given us in Christ before the world began.

He saved and called us according to his purpose.

Not possible to renew again to repentance.

We enter into the holy place by his blood.

We obtain eternal redemption by his blood.

The blood of Christ purges us from dead works.

The blood of Christ moves us to serve the living God.

Christ has appeared in heaven before God's presence for us.

Christ put away my sin by the sacrifice of himself.

The law was just a shadow of good things to come.

We obtain faith through the righteousness of God and Jesus our saviour.

God does not will that any perish, but that all come to repentance.

By works a man is justified. (Balance: faith and works should never be divorced when it comes to practical matters)

Repent for the Kingdom

Be baptized ... confessing your sins.

Jesus upbraided them: they did not repent.

Heard, understood, and bore fruit

Lip service, but their heart is far from me.

Come after me, deny self, take up cross and follow me.

Be converted and become as little children to enter kingdom.

Humble yourself as a little child and be great in the kingdom.

They repented not - refusing to believe.

John preached the baptism of repentance for remission of sins.

Repent and believe the gospel - the kingdom is at hand.

Be converted and their sins should be forgiven them.

They preached that men should repent.

Many shall turn to the Lord their God. - Repentance.

He preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.

Axe is laid at root of tree that does not bear fruit - cut down and cast into the fire.

Except you repent, you will perish.

There is joy in the presence of angels for God over one sinner that repents.

When you are converted, strengthen your brethren.

Repentance and remission of sins will be preached in his name.

Repent, be baptized for remission of sins and receive gift of HS.

Repent, be converted that your sins may be blotted out. God raised Jesus to give repentance and forgiveness of sins.

Repent and pray to God for forgiveness.

God granted repentance unto life.

They preached repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul preached repentance - turn to God and do works meet for repentance.

Repent - I will come quickly.

God gave them space to repent, they failed to do so.

I will judge you except you repent.

Hold fast and repent.

Be zealous and repent.

They did not repent of...

They did not repent - they did not give him glory.

Jesus took away the law and established another covenant.

EXAMPLES OF REPENTANCE

Abraham was justified by faith.

Abraham believed God - it was counted unto him for righteousness.

David stated, God imputes righteousness without works.

Abraham possessed faith before being circumcized.

Abraham had 2 sons

Two covenants

Born of flesh/Spirit

Bond woman/Free woman

Found no place of repentance.

Rahab was justified by works.

FRUIT OF REPENTANCE

Glory, honor and peace are reserved for those who have repented and work good.

The work of the law is written in our hearts.

Our conscience and thoughts convict us and lead us to repentance.

We are to bring forth fruit worthy of repentance.

Zacheus restored them 4 fold - repentance moved him